

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 SAM-01 AID-05 IO-04 ACDA-05

OPR-01 OC-01 CCO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3035

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 942

LUSAKA FOR CONSUL GENERAL KILLORAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MILI AO

SUBJ: MINI-COUP IN CABINDA

1. SUMMARY. ON NOV. 2 A JOINT PORTUGUESE ARMY- MPLA ARMED FORCE UNDER THE COMMAND OF A PORTUGUESE ARMY CAPTAIN MOVED INTO CABINDA CITY, OCCUPIED KEY POINTS AND ARRESTED THE DISTRICT GOVERNOR AND HIS STAFF. A JUNTA MEMBER FROM LUANDA WAS SENT TO CABINDA ON THE EVENING OF NOV. 2 TO INVESTIGATE. THE CITY WAS CALM ON NOV. 3 BUT IT IS STILL UNCLEAR WHO IS IN CONTROL. END SUMMARY.

2. AT MID-DAY ON NOV 2, TWO COMPANIES OF PORTUGUESE ARMY TROOPS FROM THE NORTHERN CABINDAN GARRISON AT BELIZE, UNDER THE COMMAND OF A CAPTAIN, MOVED INTO CABINDA CITY. THESE TROOPS WERE JOINED
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BY A COMPANY OF MPLA TROOPS FROM THEIR BASE AT MICONGE IN THE

NORTHERN TIP OF CABINDA. AFTER SECURING THE RADIO STATION, TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH EXCHANGE AND THE AIRPORT, THEY MOVED TO THE SECTOR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS WHERE THEY ARRESTED BRIGADEIR THEMUDO BARATA, WHO WAS THE DISTRICT GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER OF PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES IN CABINDA AND HIS STAFF. THE APPARENT REASON FOR THE ARREST WAS BARATA'S PRO-FLEC ATTITUDE AND HIS INABILITY TO RESTORE CALM TO THE CITY.

3. ONCE THE CITY WAS SECURED AND THE FORMER DISTRICT GOVERNMENT UNDER ARREST THE COMMANDER OF THE BELIGZE GARRISON, LT. COL. OLIVEIRA, WAS BROUGHT BY HELICOPTER TO ASSUME CONTROL OF THE DISTRICT. IN A STATEMENT TO A LUANDA REPORTER HE DISCLAIMED ANY ROLE IN THE TAKE-OVER, SAYING THAT HE WAS MERELY CALLED IN TO ASSUME CHARGE AFTER THE COUP BY THE JUNIOR OFFICERS THAT HAD CARRIED IT OFF.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS FLEC ADHERENTS BEGAN DISAPPEARING FROM CABINDA CITY SOON AFTER THE APPEARANCE OF THE "JOINT FORCE" OF MPLA-PORTUGUESE ARMY TROOPS. THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION WHAT ACTION FLEC INTENDS TO TAKE BUT PRESS REPORTS STATE THAT THE SPECIAL TROOPS, (TES) BLACK CABINDANS RECRUITED AND ARMED BY THE PORTUGUESE ARMY FOR DUTY IN CABINDA, WERE VERY ACTIVE IN FLEC'S BEHALF AND SEEM TO HAVE GONE WITH FLEC TO THE NEARBY FORESTS.

5. THE PRESS STATED THAT MPLA TROOPS LEFT CABINDA CITY BY PORTUGUESE ARMY TRUCKS A FEW HOURS AFTER THE CITY WAS SECURED, RETURNING TO THEIR BASE AT MICONGE.

6. FROM PRESS REPORTS AND A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THESE JUNIOR OFFICERS MOVED ON THEIR OWN ACCORD, WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF LUANDA. IN THE FIRST COMMUNIQUE FROM CABINDA THEY REFERRED TO THEMSELVES AS "PROGRESSIVE YOUNG OFFICERS" BUT THE ANGOLAN JUNTA DID NOT ALLOW THIS COMMUNIQUE TO BE BROADCAST IN LUANDA. INSTEAD THE JUNTA REFERRED TO "MISUNDERSTANDINGS AMONG SOME OFFICERS OF THE ARMED FORCES."

7. BRIGADIER BARATA, THE IMMEDIATE OBJECT OF THE COUP, IS WELL KNOWN TO CONGEN OFFICERS AND WE ARE IN A POSITION TO CONFIRM THE GENERAL NATURE OF HIS INCLINATION TOWARD AN INDEPENDENT CABINDA.
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APPARENTLY HIS ACTIONS ON NOV. 1 IN CLOSING DOWN FLEC'S HEADQUARTERS IN CABINDA CITY WERE MORE COSMETIC THAN REAL AND WERE TAKEN UNDER DURESS FROM HIS SUBORDINATES. PRESS REPORTS INDICATED THAT EVEN AFTER THE "CRACKDOWN ON FLEC ON NOV. 1 THAT FLEC AND TES CONTINUED TO ROAM THE CITY AND TO CONTROL VARIOUS CHECKPOINTS.

8. THE ANGOLAN JUNTA DESPATCHED AIR FORCE COMMANDER BRIGADEIRO SILVA CARDOSO TO CABINDA ON THE AFTERNOON OF NOV 2 TO INVESTIGATE

THE SITUATION AND ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THE ISSUES. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS HE MET WITH ALL INVOLVED, INCLUDING THE MPLA CHIEF OF STAFF FOR THE NORTHERN FRONT, DAVID ANTONIO MOISES. THE FORMER DISTRICT GOVERNOR BARATA AND THOSE ON HIS STAFF WHO WERE ARRESTED WERE SENT TO LUANDA ON NOV 3. THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER INDICATIONS FROM CABINDA OR LUANDA AS TO THE OUTCOME OF CARDOSO'S CONVERSATIONS.

9. THERE IS A CONGEN OFFICER IN CABINDA ON NOV. 4 AND WE WILL SEND A FURTHER REPORT UPON HIS RETURN.
PORTER

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